

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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June 21, 2016

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

We are writing to request that the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) continue to assist the Committee with our oversight of the over \$80 billion the federal government annually spends on information technology (IT) and request that GAO assess Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and agency management of the top ten priority IT programs as reported to Congress.

In February 2015, GAO added “Improving the Management of IT Acquisitions and Operations” to its biannual High Risk list.¹ GAO found the government spent billions on failed and poorly performing IT investments. In order to resolve the IT acquisition high risk designation, GAO has said that “expeditious” FITARA implementation is critical to IT Acquisition reform.²

Consequently, the Committee has spent considerable time overseeing the federal government’s IT spending and implementation of the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA). The Committee has held several IT hearings, including the most recent, June 10, 2016 hearing on the role of the U.S Digital Service (USDS) and GSA’s digital technology group 18F, in addressing IT challenges.

In fiscal year 2015, Congress provided \$20 million for IT oversight and reform activities by the USDS, required OMB to identify the 10 highest priority IT investment projects that are under development across federal agencies and report quarterly to congressional committees on their progress.³ In fiscal year 2016, Congress provided \$30 million for IT oversight and reform activities and directed the USDS to “collaborate with Federal agencies to deliver information technology improvements” and to provide a quarterly report to Congress on USDS activities and

¹ 2015 GAO High Risk Report, GAO-15-290 (Feb. 2015).

² 2015 GAO High Risk Report at “What Remains to be Done” available at http://www.gao.gov/highrisk/improving_management_it_acquisitions_operations/why_did_study#t=2

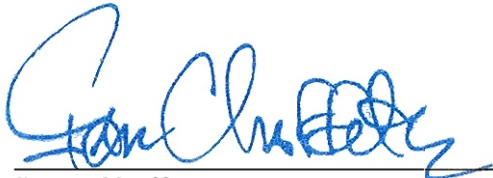
³ Explanatory Statement for the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act 2015 160 Cong. Rec. H9736 (Dec. 11, 2014).

the top 10 high priority programs.⁴ OMB delivered the first *10 High Priority Programs* report on June 15, 2015 and the most recent report on June 9, 2016.⁵ The Committee remains focused on IT and appreciates this priority list as a useful tool. As part of the Committee's continuing IT oversight, the Committee specifically requests that GAO:

1. Assess the agency oversight provided for these 10 high priority programs (including frequency and level of reviews) and summarize their performance;
2. Assess the USDS actions to prioritize their work, including how USDS uses the 10 high priority IT investment development projects to prioritize their activities and resources;
3. Assess how and when the USDS coordinates with agency CIOs in providing assistance on these 10 highest priority IT investment development projects; and
4. Determine what improvements can be made to the quarterly status reports.

Please contact Julie Dunne or Troy Stock of the Majority staff with any questions about this request. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman



Will Hurd
Chairman
Subcommittee on Information Technology



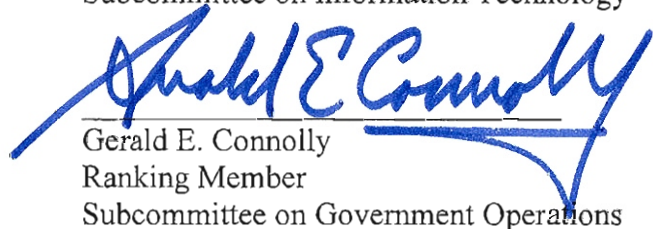
Mark Meadows
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member



Robin L. Kelly
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Information Technology



Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

⁴ Explanatory Statement for the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act 2016 161 Cong. Rec. H10137 (Dec. 17, 2015).

⁵ Office of Mgmt and Budget (OMB) Quarterly Report to Congress: 10 High Priority Programs (June 25, 2016); Office of Mgmt and Budget (OMB) Quarterly Report to Congress: 10 High Priority Programs (June 9, 2016).